background. Comparing the situation at the depths of the depression in Germany and the United States, we felt that Roosevelt, with his big heart, bold vision, undaunted courage, and political skill, had saved his country from catastrophe such as had engulfed Germany.

The first Roosevelt speech we heard on the radio was his famous address to the Philadelphia Convention in June, 1936: "To some generations much is given. Of other generations much is expected. This generation of America has a rendezvous with destiny. . . ." He could not have known then that history was approaching a turning point at which the destiny of the United States would be to save the democratic form of government throughout the world.

## ISOLATIONISM

The predominant orientation in the United States in the middle 1930's, when we came here, was isolationist. The people knew little about international affairs, cared even less, and did not realize that developments in Russia, Germany, or Japan could affect their vital interests. Rather, there was a strong feeling that the United States was so richly endowed with natural resources and was so big and so strong it could follow its own road, leaving the European nations to solve their problems. This attitude was not necessarily an ideological neutrality between the forces of freedom and Nazism clashing in the Old World. Some isolationists had better arguments in support of their views. The European powers, they said, have always fought one another, and the United States has never taken sides in their internal strife. If we should wish to support any definite party, how could we do it? Would not the attempt of our government to intervene in European affairs result in dividing this nation against itself? Thus was born the idea of the fortress America protected by two oceans, like formidable moats, against attack or encroachment by overseas powers. The task of the government, according to this conception, was to fortify these defenses and be ready to repulse any assault of the enemy. Isolationism, in different forms, was predominant in the United States in 1937-38, although some people realized even then that, in the event of a major war, this country would be compelled to take a stand and probably to take up arms.

Roosevelt was one of the first statesmen in this hemisphere who realized that the world was in revolutionary convulsions, that a total war was impending, and that the United States could not remain a passive spectator. Yet even he was unable to alert the people to the imminent danger. His "quarantine the aggressor" speech in Chicago in October, 1937, found no response even in his own party.

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